



Department of Human Resources
311 W. Saratoga St.
Baltimore, MD. 21201-3521

FIA INFORMATION MEMO

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**TO: DIRECTORS, LOCAL DEPARTMENTS OF SOCIAL SERVICES
DEPUTY/ASSISTANT DIRECTORS FOR FAMILY INVESTMENT
FAMILY INVESTMENT SUPERVISORS AND CASE MANAGERS**

**FROM: *Rosemary Malone*
ROSEMARY MALONE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

RE: HOMELESS YOUTH HOUSEHOLDS

PROGRAM AFFECTED: FOOD SUPPLEMENT PROGRAM

ORIGINATING OFFICE: OFFICE OF PROGRAMS

Homeless individuals and homeless youth present Maryland case managers with numerous challenges. This information memo is to remind FIA staff about policy specifically for homeless households in need of food assistance. It is very important that we do everything possible to remove barriers to providing assistance to those most in need.

Definition of Homeless

A homeless person is someone who lacks a fixed and regular nighttime residence or a person whose primary nighttime residence is a:

- ◆ Supervised shelter that provides temporary accommodations, including a welfare hotel or congregate shelter;
- ◆ Halfway house or similar institution that provides temporary accommodations for people intended to be institutionalized;
- ◆ Temporary accommodation in the residence of another person for no more than 90 days; or
- ◆ A place not designed for, or ordinarily used as regular sleeping accommodations such as a hallway, a bus station, a lobby, a car, an abandoned building or any similar place.

Example: Mr. Smith is 17 and applying for food stamps. He temporarily stays with his family, friends and in shelters. He often finds himself sleeping in alleys, bus depots, and in abandoned buildings. He states that he does not stay at any one location more than 90 days at a time because he prefers to remain independent and unsupervised. Based on the above definition, he is homeless.

Verification

The verification of residency at application is mandatory, except in certain situations. Some homeless households may find it impossible to verify residency. If it is impossible to verify residency, certify the household for benefits if otherwise eligible.

- ◆ Follow your local office SOP for using designated homeless household specific addresses, locations or PO box address

Verification of identity may also be difficult for homeless households. Documents used to verify other factors of eligibility are normally sufficient to confirm residence or identity. Remember photographic identification is not needed for apply for the Food Supplement Program (FSP).

Reminder:

- Households in which all members are homeless but are not receiving free shelter are entitled to the standard homeless shelter allowance of \$143. Allow actual shelter expenses, instead of the homeless shelter allowance, if the actual shelter costs would result in a higher deduction under the excess shelter calculation.
- There is no requirement that applicants must have a permanent address in order to apply for FSP benefits.
- There is no age requirement as to who can apply for FSP benefits. Homeless youth who are not living with their parent(s) (biological, adoptive or step parent) or if under the age of 18, with a person acting in parental control, are not required to apply as part of their parent(s) household.
- An individual must apply as a household with the other people he or she lives with if they customarily purchase and prepare food together.

We are aware some homeless youth may fall under parental control of a non-parent household member, other homeless youth may not. Any individual living alone must be given the opportunity to apply as a one person household under FSP policy.

INQUIRIES

Please direct food stamp policy questions to Rick McClendon (rick.mcclendon@maryland.gov) 410-767-7307. Direct CARES systems questions to Fern Hill (fern.hill@maryland.gov) 410-767-7064.

cc: FIA Management Staff
Constituent Services
DHR Help Desk